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THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

SUBJECT: Meeting with Ciriaco De Mita, Prime Minister of Italy

PARTICIPANTS: The President
James A. Baker, III, Secretary of State
William Reilly, Administrator of the EPA
John Sununu, Chief of Staff to the President
Marlin Fitzwater, Assistant to the President and Press Secretary
Brent Scowcroft, Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs
Robert Zoellick, Counselor, Department of State
Rozanne Ridgway, Assistant Secretary of State
Margaret Tutwiler, Assistant Secretary of State
Maxwell Rabb, U.S. Ambassador to Italy
Philip Zelikow, NSC Staff (notetaker)
Interpreter

Ciriaco De Mita, Prime Minister
Giulio Andreotti, Foreign Minister
Luigi Cavalchini, Foreign Ministry Chief of Staff
Andrea Manzella, Secretary General of Presidency of the Council of Ministers
Umberto Vattani, Prime Minister's Office
General Franco Angioni, Prime Minister's Office
Ugo de Mohr, NATO Adviser
Mr. Perlot, Foreign Ministry Director General
Interpreter

DATE, TIME May 27, 1989, 11:48 a.m. - 12:02 p.m.
AND PLACE: Villa Madama, Rome

Prime Minister De Mita opened the expanded discussion by asking the President for his views on the evolution of East-West relations.

(7)

The President said he saw tremendous change in Eastern Europe, with Poland and Hungary obviously in the forefront. The President recounted his offer of assistance in Poland's economic recovery, provided the Poles could persist in making needed

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economic reforms. His overall goal was not to stir up trouble but to make it clear that, as the East moved toward greater freedom and human rights, the U.S. would respond. (Z)

The President continued, saying that his policy would not involve a "post-Yalta" arrangement, sitting with the Soviets to divide up spheres of influence. The goal was differentiation based on movement toward democracy and economic liberty. While this called for a certain amount of delicacy, to avoid seeming to exhort people to the barricades as occurred with Hungary in 1956, Western values had intrinsic appeal. The U.S. would reach out, selectively, in every way it could. Actions would not be so "flamboyant" that the Soviets would feel the need to take action to reverse movement toward freedom. The next few years would be exciting. Eastern Europe would be a high priority for the Administration. (Z)

Prime Minister De Mita asked for an overall assessment of East-West relations. (Z)

The President said they were pretty good. Despite what some had said, the President wanted Gorbachev to succeed and had told him so personally in New York. Caution was still needed, since foreign policies could not be based on one individual. However, the U.S. wanted good relations with the Soviet Union and was conducting its policies so that the Soviets knew that. A summit meeting with Gorbachev was still up in the air. The President's proposals would show he was prepared to be forthcoming, but the President was not interested in a public relations or charm school battle with Gorbachev. The U.S. had asked for help on arms sales to Central America and there had been frank discussions on this issue. The Soviets had shown interest in changing their policies. Angola was one example. There were possibilities for a more constructive Soviet role in restraining their Middle Eastern clients. So the President thought the Soviets might be able to be more helpful on Central America as well. (Z)

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